

**FHWA Discretionary Programs  
Value Pricing Pilot Program**

**SKETCH PLAN**

**Investigation of Implementation of a Value Priced Queue Jump Bypass  
for the Proposed Summerlin Road/Gladiolus Drive Interchange**

Submitted By:

Scott M. Gilbertson, Director  
Lee County Department of Transportation  
1500 Monroe Street  
Fort Myers, Florida 33901  
(941) 479-8580

Submitted To:

James E. St. John  
Division Administrator  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
227 N. Bronough Street, Suite 2015  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Mike Rippe  
District Director, Southwest Area Office  
Florida Department of Transportation  
P. O. Box 1030  
Fort Myers, Florida 33902-1030

September 30, 2001

# **FHWA Discretionary Programs Value Pricing Pilot Program**

## **SKETCH PLAN**

### **Investigation of Implementation of a Value Priced Queue Jump Bypass for the Proposed Summerlin Road/Gladiolus Drive Interchange**

#### ***1. Congestion Problem***

Summerlin Road is the primary transportation corridor for travel to Sanibel Island and Fort Myers Beach, serving as an approach road to the Sanibel toll facility (see map in Attachment I). It is currently a four-lane divided arterial (rural cross-section), with a special designation as a “controlled access” facility. The “controlled access” designation means the access connections and allowable movements have been specified by the Board of County Commissioners by resolution, typically at a much higher level of control than a standard arterial, and cannot be changed without a detailed analysis, substantial justification and a super-majority vote of the Board.

The Gladiolus/Summerlin intersection is a critical point in the Summerlin Road corridor because it is the primary connection for all traffic coming from the west, north and south to the beach areas. Operational analysis indicates that travel demand at the Gladiolus/Summerlin intersection would exceed capacity by the year 2020. The analysis looked at some alternative configurations, and determined that a grade separation would provide the optimum level of service, although at significant cost. The Board of County Commissioners considered the alternatives at its June meeting and agreed with pursuing the grade separation. The County wishes to consider value pricing options for the grade separation.

#### ***2. Nature of proposed project to respond to the problem (Include goals, time line for study and possible implementation)***

The County already has a robust value pricing program in place on two area bridges and is currently implementing expansion of that program to 3 plus axle vehicles. It is also studying the possibility of implementing value priced queue jumps in the County. Due to the timing of the design of the Gladiolus/Summerlin interchange the County wishes to accelerate design analysis of this interchange for a value priced queue jump by analyzing the feasibility of designating one or more lanes as a value priced lane(s). This application is a request for a \$500,000 grant to study the design implications of such an implementation project including the roadway geometrics, electronic toll collection (ETC) hardware and software, and violation enforcement system (VES) hardware and software. This application is also a request for implementation funding of \$1.5M, assuming the initial design study proves feasible. The county is interested in leveraging

funding obtained from the value pricing program with funds from other sources. Lee County will also be pursuing approval for a future \$4 million loan application from the state infrastructure bank (SIB) fund for the right-of-way acquisition phase for the overpass to be done in FY 2002/2003 in conjunction with the right-of-way acquisition for the six-laning of the roadway itself.

***3. Additional signatories to co-op agreement – indications of support from parties (or plans for obtaining support)***

The owner operator of facilities planned for inclusion in this program is the Lee County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). A planned additional signatory to the co-operative agreement is the Florida Department of Transportation. It is anticipated that their support can be obtained through their participation on the Project Management Team for the existing projects. The Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) supports Variable Pricing in the county, and continued coordination with the MPO will occur through Lee County's representatives on the MPO. LeeTran, the Lee County Transit System, while not a signatory to the Agreement, is anticipated to be represented on the Project Management Team.

***4. Extent of public participation in development of the proposal***

Significant public participation has been done and is ongoing for the current value pricing projects. Value pricing has enjoyed excellent public support in the county, and this proposal reflects the opportunity that this support brings to expand the program.

Public participation for value pricing has included a series of public meetings held specifically to introduce the Lee County variable pricing concept to the citizens of Lee County, telephone surveys, focus groups, surveys of LeeWay customers, roadside surveys, presentations to numerous civic associations, and presentations to the MPO and its Technical and Citizen's Advisory Committees. Additionally, the project has enjoyed exceptionally strong coverage from the local media including two editorial endorsements.

Finally, the citizens of Lee County have actually been able to participate in variable pricing, and significant changes in traffic patterns have occurred on facilities offering variable pricing. This usage is basically the ultimate measure of public participation and acceptance, and bodes well for the future of expanding the project.

Equity concerns can be a potential issue in value pricing projects, and equity concerns similar to those encountered in High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes may arise. The County will address such issues, should they arise as part of the design analysis process.

***5. Legal and administrative authority needed to implement – steps needed to obtain necessary authority***

The Lee County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has the administrative authority to implement the project. The BOCC has been very supportive of the value-pricing program to date, including implementation of variable pricing on two major roadway facilities in the county. Further, it is the strong desire of the BOCC to support an efficient transportation infrastructure in the county, a goal forwarded by this project.

***6. Plans for pre-project study or findings from study already completed***

The origin of the concept for this program is the ongoing Lee County Variable Pricing Program; therefore, the entire county effort to date could be considered findings from a pre-project study. Additionally, work is ongoing, and will be incorporated into the proposed project to effectively provide data necessary to establish baseline conditions for comparison with conditions that exist before construction of the proposed enhancements.

**Lee County, Florida**

**Investigation of Implementation of a Value Priced  
Queue Jump Bypass for the Proposed Summerlin Road/Gladiolus Drive  
Interchange**

**Projected Budget**

Study

Data Collection - Pre Design	\$10,000
User Survey - Pre Design	\$25,000
Focus Groups - Pre Design	\$20,000
Public Outreach	\$30,000
Data Analysis - Pre Construction Conditions	\$20,000
Design Development of Variable Pricing Elements of the Interchange	\$240,000
Final Concept Evaluation	\$80,000
Reporting and Presentations of Results	\$25,000
Contingency	\$25,000
Project Administration	\$25,000
Total	\$500,000

